

**Amendments to the Claims**

The current listing of the claims replaces all previous amendments and listings of the claims.

1. and 2. (Canceled)

3. (New) An image forming apparatus, comprising:

a scanner unit configured to scan an image;

a printer unit disposed below the scanner unit and configured to form an image on a recording medium;

an operation panel disposed above the printer unit and adjacent a front side of the image forming apparatus, the operation panel configured to receive a command by which the image forming apparatus is operated;

a sheet discharge section disposed between the scanner unit and the printer unit, the sheet discharge section configured to receive the recording medium including the image; and

a casing disposed adjacent a side end of the printer unit, the casing arranged to support the operation panel;

wherein a front side of the scanner unit is off set from a front side of the printer unit, and the scanner unit is supported by a side wall of the printer unit and forms an opening to the sheet discharge section that is open in at least two directions.

4. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the operation panel is disposed adjacent the scanner unit.

5. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the operation panel is connected to the scanner unit, and the operation panel is off set from the front side of the printer unit.

6. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the operation panel is set back from the front side of the printer unit.

7. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the scanner unit is set back from the front side of the printer unit.

8. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the scanner unit does not extend past a plane in which the front side of the printer unit is disposed.

9. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the front side of the scanner unit does not extend past a front side of the casing.

10. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the front side of the casing is disposed in a same plane as the front side of the printer unit.

11. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising:  
at least one fixing roller disposed in the casing.

12. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the least one fixing roller comprises a pair of fixing rollers.

13. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the scanner unit forms the opening to the sheet discharge section that is open in first and second directions about perpendicular to one another.

14. (New) An image forming apparatus, comprising:  
means for scanning an image;  
means for printing a scanned image on a recording medium, the means for printing disposed below the means for scanning;

means for inputting a command by which the image forming apparatus is operated, the means for inputting disposed above the means for printing and adjacent a front side of the image forming apparatus;

means for receiving the recording medium including the image, the means for receiving disposed between the means for scanning and the means for printing; and

means for supporting the means for inputting; the means for supporting connected to the means for printing;

wherein a front side of the means for scanning is off set from a front side of the means for printing, and the means for scanning is supported by a side wall of the means for printing and forms an opening to the means for receiving that is open in at least two directions.

15. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the means for inputting is connected to the means for scanning, and the means for inputting is off set from the front side of means for printing.

16. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the means for inputting and the means for scanning do not extend past the front side of the means for printing.

17. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the means for scanning does not extend past the front side of the means for printing.

18. (New) An image forming apparatus, comprising:

an image reading block configured to read an image;

an image forming block disposed below the image reading block and configured to form an image on a recording sheet;

an operation panel disposed above the image forming block and adjacent a front side of the image forming apparatus, the operation panel configured to receive a command by which the image forming apparatus is operated;

a sheet discharge section disposed between the image reading block and the image forming block, the sheet discharge section configured to receive the recording sheet including the image; and

a casing disposed adjacent a side end of the image forming block, the casing arranged to support the operation panel;

wherein a front side of the image reading block is set back from a front side of the image forming block, and the image reading block is supported by a side wall of the image forming block and forms an opening to the sheet discharge section that is open in at least two directions.

19. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 18, further comprising:  
at least one set of fixing rollers disposed in the casing.

20. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the image reading block forms the opening to the sheet discharge section that is open in first and second directions about perpendicular to one another.

21. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the front side of the operation panel is set back from the front side of the image forming block.

22. (New) An image forming apparatus, comprising:

means for reading an image;

means for forming an image on a recording sheet, the means for forming disposed below the means for reading;

means for inputting a command for operating the image forming apparatus, the means for inputting disposed above the means for forming and adjacent a front side of the image forming apparatus;

means for receiving the recording sheet on which the image is formed, the means for receiving disposed between the means for reading and the means for forming; and

means for supporting the means for inputting,

wherein a front side of the means for reading is set back from a front side of the means for forming an image, and the means for reading is supported by a side wall of the means for forming and forms an opening to the means for receiving that is open in at least two directions.

23. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 22, further comprising:  
means for fixing the image formed on the recording sheet.

24. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the means  
for forming forms the opening to the means for receiving that is open in first and second  
directions about perpendicular to one another.

25. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the front  
side of the means for inputting is set back from the front side of the means for forming an  
image.